

Quality Improvement Resource List

Introduction

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) final rule requires all American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) grantees to spend a percentage of their total CCDF expenditures on quality improvement activities. Quality improvement activities are described as “activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to high-quality child care.”¹ Quality funds must be used to carry out at least 1 of 10 allowable quality improvement activities:

- ◆ [Training and professional development](#)
- ◆ [Early learning and development guidelines](#)
- ◆ [Tiered quality rating and improvement system](#)
- ◆ [Quality and supply of infant/toddler services](#)
- ◆ [Child care resource and referral services](#)
- ◆ [Licensing and health and safety requirements](#)
- ◆ [Quality evaluation](#)
- ◆ [Accreditation](#)
- ◆ [High-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development](#)
- ◆ [Other measurable quality activities as determined by the AI/AN Lead Agency](#)

This document provides examples of key resources for AI/AN CCDF grantees related to each of the 10 allowable quality improvement activities.

CCDF Final Rule Requirements for Quality

All AI/AN CCDF grantees are required to spend a percentage of their total CCDF expenditures on quality improvement activities. Medium and large allocation grantees are also subject to an additional 3 percent infant and toddler spending requirement that begins in fiscal year (FY) 2019.

Resource Title	Description
Quality Improvement in AI/AN CCDF Programs	This webinar provides an overview of CCDF final rule regulations on quality improvement for AI/AN CCDF grantees. It also includes implementation considerations and information on training and technical assistance resources.

¹ Child Care and Development Fund, 45 C.F.R. § 98.83(g)(1) (2016).

Training and Professional Development

AI/AN grantees can use quality funds to support the training, professional development, and postsecondary education of the child care workforce.

Resource Title	Description
Better Kid Care	Better Kid Care's On Demand Distance Education system provides professional development to early care and youth development professionals to improve the quality of their care and educational practices.
Early Educator Central	Early Educator Central features professional development resources for infant/toddler educators gaining degrees and credentials. It also provides resources for administrators, trainers and coaches, professional development system leaders, and more.
Innovative Practices: Creating Professional Development Plans	This webinar provides information about professional development plans for early childhood program staff to help them identify strengths and needs while they set short- and long-term career goals.
Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Professional Development Guide	These guides are designed for staff and managers from Head Start, Early Head Start, and early child care programs. The guides offer resources, group experiences, and activities to support effective parent, family, and community engagement. The guides can be used as part of a professional development plan to shape a systemic, integrated, and comprehensive approach to parent, family, and community engagement.
Professional Development-to-Go	This page includes ready-to-use professional development resources. These products may be useful to program managers, trainers, consultants, and those working in early education and care programs. The materials reflect evidence-based practices that include: intensive, ongoing, active learning experiences; specific, practice-focused content; self-assessment and feedback; and alignment with instructional goals, learning standards, and curriculum materials.
Teaching Practices	This webpage provides information and resources on effective, nurturing, and responsive teaching practices and interactions that are key for all learning in early childhood settings.
Virtual Lab School	The Virtual Lab School (VLS) provides an easy-to-navigate online professional development and resource system to support early childhood professionals to build their knowledge and skills around research-based practices in child care and youth development.

Early Learning and Development Guidelines

Although AI/AN CCDF grantees are exempt from the requirement to have early learning and development guidelines, they may choose to use their quality funds to support guideline development and implementation. Funds can also be used to provide support to CCDF providers as they implement activities related to early learning and development domains (cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development).

Resource Title	Description
Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) Resources: Child Outcomes	This resource list provides a range of material on child outcomes in the early learning space.

Resource Title	Description
Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework	The new framework is designed to show the continuum of learning of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It is grounded in comprehensive research around what young children should know and be able to do during their early years.
State Early Learning Standards and Guidelines	This document provides a link to all states that have their Early Learning Standards and Guidelines on a public website.

Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

AI/AN grantees may choose to use quality funds for quality rating and improvement systems (QRISs). This can include participating in a state QRIS, developing an AI/AN QRIS, or collaborating with other AI/AN grantees to implement a QRIS.

Resource Title	Description
Cost Estimation Model for Quality Rating and Improvement Systems	The Cost Estimation Model is intended to be a guide, based on the best available data, to projecting the key elements and cost of implementing a QRIS in a state or community.
QRIS Resource Guide	The guide is a tool to help states and communities explore key issues and decision points during the planning and implementation of a QRIS.
Tribal Child Care: Exploring Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, Brief #1	This resource provides an overview of QRIS for AI/AN CCDF grantees. It outlines five key components of a QRIS and provides examples of standards and ratings.

Quality and Supply of Infant/Toddler Services

Quality funds may be used for activities to improve the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers. Beginning in FY 2019, grantees with medium and large allocations will have to spend 3 percent of their expenditures on quality activities specific to infants and toddlers. However, all AI/AN grantees can use their quality funds to implement these activities if they choose.

Resource Title	Description
Early Educator Central	Early Educator Central features professional development resources for infant/toddler educators gaining degrees and credentials. It also provides resources for administrators, trainers and coaches, professional development system leaders, and more.
Early Essentials	This series offer key messages and helpful resources to support staff working with infants and toddlers and their families. Managers can use Early Essentials to design orientation experiences or staff can participate on their own. The first six webisodes cover the following: components of quality in programs serving the youngest children, the importance of relationships, services to expectant families, the rapid growth and development of the first three years, school readiness for infants and toddlers, and self-care.
Infant/Toddler Resource Guide	This resource guide offers a variety of materials to support the development and implementation of policies and practices for high-quality care for infants and toddlers.

Resource Title	Description
The Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) Six Essential Program Practices for Relationship-Based Care	This series helps promote essential program practices to ensure quality within FCC and center-based programs that serve infants and toddlers. It addresses the following topics: continuity of care, culturally sensitive care, inclusion, individualized care, primary care, and small groups.
Staffed Family Child Care Networks: A Strategy to Enhance Quality Care for Infants and Toddlers	This paper defines staffed family child care (FCC) networks and examines how they are uniquely positioned to improve the quality of care that infants and toddlers receive in FCC settings.
Teacher Time: Implementing Curriculum in a Responsive Environment, Birth to 5: Infant/Toddler Curriculum Series	This professional development series is designed for Head Start and Early Head Start staff, teachers, and those who care for and teach young children in center-based and FCC settings.

Child Care Resource and Referral Services

AI/AN grantees can use their quality funds to implement or expand a system of child care resource and referral (CCR&R) services. An AI/AN can fund its own CCR&R, use the state CCR&R, or partner with other grantees to offer CCR&R services. Grantees can also focus on activities aimed at incorporating CCR&R services into program services.

Resource Title	Description
Early Learning Systems Building: Leveraging Child Care Resource and Referral	This webinar, offered by the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance, provides an overview of child care resource and referral in evolving early learning systems and examines trends and innovations at the state and local level. This webinar benefits an array of audiences including CCDF Administrators, QRIS administrators, professional development administrators, and child care resource and referral staff.

Licensing and Health and Safety Requirements

AI/AN CCDF grantees can use quality funds to implement quality improvement activities that facilitate compliance with requirements for inspections, monitoring, training, health and safety, and licensing standards. AI/AN CCDF grantees must meet CCDF final rule requirements for health and safety standards, monitoring, and training. Although they are exempt from the requirement to have a child care licensing system, they can still choose to implement a licensing framework and use quality funds to support compliance with licensing.

Resource Title	Description
American Indian and Alaska Native Child Care and Development Fund Monitoring Toolkit	This toolkit was developed to support AI/AN CCDF grantees with the design and implementation of monitoring and enforcement systems. It includes guides, tools, sample monitoring materials, and videos demonstrating monitoring visits.

Resource Title	Description
<u><i>Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd Edition</i></u>	This document is a collection of 686 standards that represent what is considered to be best practice nationally on child care health and safety. Each standard, written by health and safety experts and reviewed by licensors and providers, also includes a “rationale” that explains why the standard is important.
<u><i>Caring for Our Children Basics Health and Safety Foundations for Early Care and Education</i></u>	Caring for our Children Basics represents the minimum health and safety standards experts believe should be in place where children are cared for outside of their homes.
<u><i>Caring for Our Children Basics Health and Safety Standards Alignment Tool for Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes</i></u>	This tool provides a simple format to compare current early childhood program requirements and standards against the recommended health and safety standards in <i>Caring for Our Children Basics</i> .
<u><i>Developing and Revising Child Care Licensing Requirements</i></u>	This document presents steps for developing and revising child care licensing requirements.
<u><i>Ensuring the Health and Safety of Children in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) CCDF Programs</i></u>	This webinar provides an overview of the CCDF final rule regulations on health and safety for AI/AN CCDF grantees. It also includes a discussion of implementation considerations and information on available training and technical assistance resources.
<u><i>Health and Safety Briefs</i></u>	These briefs address the health and safety topics specified in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014. They can help child care and Head Start providers understand and improve the health and safety of their early learning and development settings.
<i>Minimum Health and Safety Standards: A Guide for American Indian and Alaska Native Child Care and Development Fund Grantees</i> (Link coming soon!)	The Minimum Health and Safety Standards provide a voluntary baseline for healthy and safe operations of child care homes and centers serving AI/AN CCDF-eligible families. The standards are in the process of being revised to align with the CCDF final rule.
<u><i>The Virtual Early Education Center (VEEC)</i></u>	VEEC is an online tool for early care and education settings, including Head Start, Early Head Start, and child care programs. VEEC allows users to explore a virtual early childhood center and find information and resources on health and safety standards and practices.

Quality Evaluation

AI/AN grantees can use their quality set aside to implement activities that assess the quality and effectiveness of their programs. This can include evaluating how programs and services positively impact children.

Resource Title	Description
<u>Benchmarks for Quality Improvement: Measuring Progress in State and Territory Program Quality Improvement Efforts</u>	The Benchmarks for Quality Improvement (BQI) were developed to assist states and territories with assessing and measuring progress in program quality improvement systems and to assess their current status in improving their early education and school-age care quality. OCC established benchmarks that are easy to understand, measurable, and that will help states and territories better plan for use of the CCDF. The benchmarks consist of five elements, each of which includes a progression of indicators that detail the expectations for progress toward or achievement of program quality. This document provides information about OCC's vision, mission, areas of expectations for states and territories, scope of indicators, and core elements.
<u>Benchmarks for Quality Improvement Self-Assessment Tool</u>	The Benchmarks for Quality Improvement Self-Assessment Tool can help states and territories assess their current status and measure progress in implementing program quality improvement systems. The Self-Assessment Tool contains a series of questions to answer for each of the benchmark indicators. These questions and the states and territories' answers should help them to determine their status on a series of progress measures—No Action, Developing, Implementing, or Fully Implementing. Space is provided for notes and to prioritize and plan for next steps in those areas where progress is needed.
<u>Integrating Evaluation into Infant/Toddler Initiatives</u>	This webinar explores considerations and methodologies related to the evaluation of state, territory, or tribal infant and toddler initiatives.
<u>Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education Settings: A Compendium of Measures, Second Edition</u>	Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education Settings was created to provide a consistent framework with which to review the existing measures of the quality of early care and education settings. This information is useful to researchers and practitioners, and can help inform the measurement of quality for policy-related purposes.

Accreditation

AI/AN grantees can choose to pursue accreditation using quality funds. This can include using accreditation guidelines as a quality measure, funding any aspect of national accreditation, and paying annual accreditation fees.

Resource Title	Description
<u>American Camp Association (ACA)</u>	Summer day camps accredited by the ACA must meet up to 300 standards for health, safety, and program quality.
<u>National AfterSchool Association (NAA)</u>	This professional organization promotes quality programs for children and youth in their out-of-school time, and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST). NAA accredits programs that meet these quality standards, based on a self-study and a NAA endorser's ratings of compliance with the standards.

Resource Title	Description
<u>National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)</u>	This organization has developed a set of quality standards that center-based programs, part-day preschools, and Head Start prekindergarten programs must meet to receive accreditation. Receipt of accreditation indicates that an early education program provides a high-quality learning environment for children that exceeds the threshold for quality set by licensing requirements. Programs must complete a self-study, submit an application, and have ratings verified by a NAEYC validator.
<u>National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)</u>	This professional organization offers education and support for quality programming in FCC. It has developed a set of standards that define quality for FCC homes. To become accredited by NAFCC, the FCC home provider must complete a self-study to rate the degree to which standards are met, submit an application to NAFCC, and have the ratings validated by an NAFCC observer.

High-Quality Program Standards Relating to Health, Mental Health, Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Physical Development

Quality funds can be used to support high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development. This can include efforts to adopt or develop standards in these areas.

Resource Title	Description
<u>Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd Edition</u>	This document is a collection of 686 standards that represent what is considered to be best practice nationally on child care health and safety. Each standard, written by health and safety experts and reviewed by licensors and providers, also includes a “rationale” that explains why the standard is important.
<u>The Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC)</u>	IECMHC is an evidence-based approach. It supports parents and other adults who work with young children in the places where children learn, play, and grow.
<u>Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)</u>	CSEFEL is a national resource center for disseminating research and evidence-based practices to strengthen the capacity of early childhood programs to improve the social and emotional outcomes of young children. CSEFEL resources such as the Pyramid Model which includes environment, interactions, and practices address children’s social-emotional competence and challenging behaviors
<u>Model Child Care Health Policies, Fifth Edition</u>	Model Child Care Health Policies contains model health policies that can be adapted or used selectively in any type of child care setting. The policies are designed to allow you to insert information specific to your site so staff can quickly reference and handle day-to-day and emergency situations with proper procedures. Also included are reproducible forms, resource lists, and safety checklists. This resource covers topics from admissions and illness to media coverage and power failures.

Other Measurable Quality Activities as Determined by the AI/AN Lead Agency

AI/AN grantees can use their quality funds to carry out other activities to improve the quality of their programs and meet the needs of the children and families they serve. These activities must be measurable, meaning that grantees must establish and assess outcomes relating to improvement of provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten readiness for these activities. Other quality activities can include, but are not limited to, activities and services related to AI/AN language and culture, consumer education efforts, quality activities for school-age or out-of-school time care, or other activities designed to address unique community needs.

AI/AN Language and Culture

Resource Title	Description
<i><u>A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start, 2016</u></i>	This report addresses the context of language in tribal communities. The traditional language may be endangered in some communities, meaning that it is not spoken widely and eventually may cease to be spoken at all. Research also indicates that when children are exposed to the tribal language in school, there are academic gains and improved physical and mental health.
<i><u>Family and Community Engagement in Young Children's Native Language Learning and Development Part 1</u></i>	This webinar explores strategies for engaging families and communities in young children's Native language learning and development. Learn about the benefits, opportunities, and challenges of this engagement.
<i><u>Head Start Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness Resource Catalogue, Volume Two: Native and Heritage Language Preservation, Revitalization, and Maintenance, Second Edition</u></i>	This catalogue provides information to support early childhood programs working to preserve, revitalize, and reclaim American Indian, Alaska Native, Pacific Island, and other heritage languages. Catalogue entries showcase resources and practices on topics such as early childhood language nests, the use of technology in language learning, immersion preschool programs, and culturally responsive curricula.
<i><u>Making It Work: Implementing Cultural Learning Experiences in American Indian and Alaska Native Early Learning Settings with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework</u></i>	Traditional lifeways, languages, and cultural heritages are important components of young children's school readiness. Making It Work helps AI/AN early education staff meet these goals as they teach children about their traditional cultural skills, values, beliefs, and lifeways.
<i><u>Standards in Action: Tribal Language Preservation and Revitalization</u></i>	This brief explores tribal language preservation and revitalization through the experience of an AI/AN Head Start program.
<i><u>Stories from Esther Martinez Initiative (EMI) Grantees</u></i>	The Esther Martinez Immersion program (formerly called the Esther Martinez Initiative) supports the development of self-determined, healthy, culturally and linguistically vibrant, self-sufficient Native American communities. These videos describe each project and show the impact the Native language programs have on participants and the larger community.

Consumer Education and Family Engagement

Resource Title	Description
Consumer Education in American Indian and Alaska Native CCDF Programs: Presentation for Medium and Large Allocation Grantees	This presentation provides an overview of consumer education requirements for AI/AN CCDF grantees with medium and large allocations. The presentation also includes a discussion on implementation considerations and highlights available training and technical assistance resources.
Consumer Engagement: Orientation for Early Childhood and School-Age Care & Education Professionals	This tool introduces a vision for engaging families as consumers of early childhood and school-age care and education services and explains how this vision relates to consumer education and family engagement.
Infant/Toddler Resource Guide: Consumer Education Overview	This web page provides an overview of requirements and strategies regarding consumer education on infant and toddler services. It also includes tools to support consumer education efforts, such as an action planning template and a checklist tool.
Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Interactive Framework	This framework provides a research-based approach to program change designed to help early childhood programs achieve outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families. The web page provides research and resources related to program foundations, program impact areas, family engagement outcomes, and child outcomes.
School-Age Care Consumer Education Toolkit	This toolkit shares consumer education information, including examples and resources on the physical, social, and emotional health and development of school-age children and engagement efforts with their parents and families.
Understanding Family Engagement Outcomes: Family Engagement and School Readiness	This resource provides information on how meaningful family engagement contributes to children's school readiness and healthy development. It also includes strategies and additional resources to support staff and programs in boosting their family engagement and school readiness practices.

Meeting Community Needs

Resource Title	Description
The Healthy Native Babies Project	This project helps local programs address safe infant sleep in AI/AN communities.
Impacted by Opioid Misuse: Perspectives from an Infant and Toddler Lens	This webinar provides facts and resources to support responsive care to families struggling with challenges related to opioid abuse.
Indian Country Child Trauma Center	The center was established to develop trauma-related treatment protocols, outreach materials, and service delivery guidelines specifically designed for AI/AN children and their families.

School Age and Summer Enrichment

Resource Title	Description
Creating a Successful Formula to Engage School-Age Programs in Quality Improvement Webinar	This webinar explores strategies for building sustainable quality improvements, ways to engage school-age programs, create standards, select assessment tools, and provide support for school-age programs. It provides information about national trends and promising practices from two states and shares strategies to build a system that works.

Resource Title	Description
Summer Learning: Promising Practices and Innovation Strategies Webinar	This webinar shares information on the importance of summer learning to closing academic and opportunity gaps, promising practices for high-quality summer learning programs, and examples of high-quality school-age summer learning programs.
Summer Programs and the Child Care and Development Fund	This FAQ document is designed for summer program providers that serve children from low-income families. These providers may be interested in serving families who use child care subsidies but are not overly familiar with CCDF.
Supporting School-Age Children in Family Child Care Interactive Webinar	This webinar session is aimed at better understanding the needs of states, territories, and Tribes around supporting school-age children in FCC. NAFCC presents an overview of the current status of FCC and supports for providers. The webinar includes information on the importance of FCC in supporting school-age children and their families; challenges facing FCC providers and the states, territories, and Tribes that support them; and examples of strategies and resources to support FCC with a focus on school-age.
Video on School-Age Child Care	This video shows the importance of afterschool and summer care for families. It tells the story of school-age child care through data and details about the experiences of children served through federal subsidies.

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